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585 of marriage before leaving them alone together. The following morning the groom's mother gives a feast to the inmates of her own house, and a month later the bride's mother sends two calabashes of tuo to her son-in-law's house, whence he distributes them to his friends and to the elders of the village as proof that the marriage has taken place.

587 When a man marries a second time the above formula is omitted. He gives the girl's parents a hoe and 4,000 cowries, after which the girl goes to him of her own accord, but if she delays doing so for more than a year after the dower is paid he can claim it back.

586 Desertion is considered no crime, and if a woman leaves her husband soon after the marriage, the dower is refunded to him by his wife's parents, but if she has remained with him for four or five years he has no claim. Her new husband pays her parents a hoe and 4,000 cowries.

● 575 173 The difficulties that have arisen from this laxity of morals are met by the following device:

"As far as this district is concerned the idea of forming a 'Dodo' society originally started in the village of Agabi, a number of years ago. Two men were bewailing the fact that their wives were constantly running away from them and that their children were getting out of hand. They put their heads together to seek a remedy.

"Eventually they took a gourd from the 'Kukan Chikki' tree, and after scraping it hollow, placed some kind of parchment over its mouth. In the middle of the night this was blown with terrifying effect (the noise is very like that produced by a comb and piece of paper). The women were very frightened and hid [796] themselves. They were subsequently told this was the voice of the 'Dodo'—a mythical spirit well known in Haussaland—rebuking them for their misdeeds. The women all promised atonement.

"The news of the Agabi 'Dodo' soon spread and people came in from the neighbouring villages, curious to hear all about it. Men were let into the secret, but had to swear under penalty of death never to tell their women or children the real origin of this new-found power over them.

575 [344] "The 'Dodo' soon became universal in every village, and each had its own particular 'kurmi,' where 'Dodo' gatherings took place. This tended to still further impress and mystify the women. Only married men were eligible for election, and not until they had been married for two or three years.

"As a rule, initiation into the 'Dodo' society was reserved until such time as there were some ten or twenty young married men ready to be elected. Their wives were informed of the impending ceremony, and on the appointed day had to cook goats or chickens provided by the candidates. The cooked

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meat was left at the respective houses, and all the members of the society, followed by the candidates, proceeded to the dreaded kurmi. The candidates were collected in the middle of the kurmi, surrounded by the rest and, as a preliminary, savagely flogged. Not unnaturally, shrieks rent the air to which the elected all added their own voices, so that the medley of sound penetrated to the village beyond and terrified the women and children. When the tumult had died down, the candidates were made to lie down in the kurmi, still surrounded by the others. Each in turn was made to raise his head and was asked by the head of his family if he had seen the 'Dodo.' As a rule the belaboured youth was too frightened to answer. The questioner then produced the gourd, blew on it, and said, 'I, myself, am the "Dodo."' He would then hand the gourd to the youth and bid him blow it, saying, 'Now you are the "Dodo."' This procedure was gone through with each candidate in turn. They were then told that the whole society was really a conspiracy to keep their women folk in subjection, that they had only been flogged to heighten the illusion, and were instructed to do the same to future candidates. Finally each candidate had to take a solemn oath under pain of death that he would never reveal the secret. The initiation was then over. 575 ●

"The newly elected then went back to their houses to get the prepared meat, which was ostensibly for the 'Dodo,' but was in reality eaten by the men in the kurmi, who, if they could not eat it all, were obliged to leave the remainder in the kurmi, as the 'Dodo' was said to have a voracious appetite. A dance was afterwards held outside the kurmi in which both sexes took part.

"No woman dared to approach the kurmi. If she had done so, she would have been caught and killed. During the initiation ceremony it was patrolled by sentries outside.

"That the oath binding the society together is no light one is shown by the following incident:

"Some years ago a newly-elected member managed to convey some of the 'Dodo's' meat out of the kurmi, and was asked by his wife where he got it. A man overheard this conversation and got the wretched youth back into the kurmi, where he was instantly beaten to death and buried. The women were told 'Dodo' had swallowed him. The men all pretended to lament his fate, and told the women to bring plenty of water and they would give it to 'Dodo' to drink, on the chance that he would vomit the youth up again. All day the women brought water to the edge of the kurmi, where the men took it from them, and, retreating into the kurmi, simply poured it away. In the evening they told the women it was no good. 'Dodo' refused to bring the youth up! 575 G88

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575 "Each candidate on election is given a gourd, but as it was foreseen that indiscriminate blowing would soon familiarise the women with the 'Dodo's' voice, no one is permitted to blow the gourd without the Magajin Dodo's consent.

"Each village has its 'Dodo' head-man, known as the Magajin Dodo. He is the supreme domestic authority and no woman, not even his wife, is allowed to enter what is designated as his 'Dodo' room. The office is hereditary, and as a rule descends from father to son. The Magajin Dodo always wears a goat-skin slung across his back. He is naturally an object of much awe to the women folk, who endeavour to propitiate him with frequent gifts of 'gia,' so that the venerable gentleman is often to be encountered in a hopelessly drunken condition. 593 It is to him that husbands appeal when their wives turn 626 refractory, and a visit from the dreaded 'Dodo' invariably 575 produces the desired effect. When the Magaji visits a disobedient wife, he is always accompanied by one of his four subordinates, called Magadda in Kagoma. The visit is prearranged and the husband plays the part of a willing accomplice in the ensuing farce.

"The approaching visit of the 'Dodo' is announced to the husband by a messenger sent on in front for that purpose. The husband professes to be very frightened and advises his wives to fly and hide in the *nearest* refuge. (This is so that they shall not be far away when wanted.) On the arrival of the 'Dodo' the erring wife is sent for. Should she refuse to come, the 'Dodo' approaches her hiding-place, and addresses his warning; the uncouth sounds made on the gourd being solemnly translated to her by the subordinate who acts as interpreter throughout. A warning is generally sufficient, but should the wife transgress again the 'Dodo' will order her to be beaten.

"To further impress these simple and credulous women with his powers, the Magajin Dodo will sit outside his house and carry on a conversation with the 'Dodo' who is inside. This is done, of course, by hiding a man inside the house who makes the necessary sounds on the gourd."*

595 There is no limit to the number of wives that may be kept, 262 and the first takes precedence over the rest. They are not allowed to eat meat, or much salt, lest they should become fat and therefore unprolific.

846 On the day that a woman gives birth to a child both she 553 and it are bathed in cold water. Two days later the family-head, *i.e.*, the eldest male member of the family, names the child, [845] of whichever sex it be, except in the case of twins, who are named 852 two months after birth by the oldest man in the village. On

* Mr. H. F. Mathews.